

# High-Cost Occurrences Funding 2025-2026

Section 24 of the Arkansas Department of Education Special Education and Related
Services

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education** 



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#### Deadlines and Due Dates



- The High-Cost Occurrences Registry will open this year in MySped on <u>December 1</u>,
   2025.
- Student information for each student MUST be entered and saved in the High-Cost Occurrences Registry by the end of day <u>January 30, 2026</u>.
  - Students CANNOT be entered after January 31, 2026.
  - Projected costs and account codes may be entered at any time.
  - O Database will close **January 31, 2026, and reopen February 9, 2026**.
- Each student listed in the High-Cost Occurrences Registry MUST have final costs entered and saved in the Registry and SUBMITTED by March 18, 2026.
  - Final costs may be submitted any time after February 9, 2026.
    - These costs may be revised and saved as often as needed until March 18, 2026.
    - All claims must be submitted by March 18, 2026.



# What is the Intent of High-Cost Funding?

Individual cases where costs associated with special education and related services required by an IEP are:

- Unduly expensive
- Extraordinary
- Beyond the normal and routine special education and related services

The State of Arkansas has appropriated \$17,934,000 for 2025-2026.



## **Funding Information**

High-Cost



## Funding

- The district is responsible for 100% of the first \$15,000 after adjusted for offsets.
- Reimbursement of High-Cost claims after offsets:
  - o 100% > \$15,000 to \$65,000
  - 80% > \$65,000 up to a cap of \$100,000 reimbursed
- Reimbursement for High-Cost claim amounts will be prorated if total requests for reimbursement exceed the amount of funds available in the High-Cost Occurrences fund.



### Funding

- Reimbursements are determined after all revenue offsets are applied which include:
  - IDEA Part B per student average (varies for each district)
  - Medicaid Reimbursement <u>estimate for entire year</u>
  - Other funds received (ESY, Third Party Liability, etc.)
- Grants and Data will preload the IDEA Part B per student average amount in February.
- Claims for preschool children must be submitted through the resident school district.
  - O Districts/Co-ops with eligible children should contact Special Ed Finance.



High-Cost



- Submitting a claim <u>DOES NOT</u> ensure that the claim will be funded.
- IEP decisions for the provision of supports and services should **NOT** be based on the availability of High-Cost (or any other funds).
- Complete the High-Cost Occurrences Registry information found on MySped to justify request for High-Cost funding and <u>SUBMIT the claim in the MySped system.</u>



• <u>LEAs are required to use and submit the HCO LEA Calculation Sheet.</u> This sheet will be emailed to all LEAs with the HCO guide, in each Three-Month Snapshot beginning in November, and posted on the OSE-Funding and Finance website under the High-Cost Occurrences section.

- Directions
- Teacher Tab
- 1:1 Paraprofessional Tab
- Multi-Student Paraprofessional Tab
- Related Service-District Employed
- Related Service-Purchase Service

- Calculate Hourly Rate
- Hourly Rate Employee
- <u>Transportation Contract</u>
- <u>Transportation Hourly</u>
- One-Time Costs
- Medicaid Match (optional)
- ESY



• All calculation evidence, a sample of IEPs, and invoices of \$1,000 or more will be submitted for review from each district at the time claims are submitted, no later than March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

- Please DO NOT submit IEPs for all students
  - The LEA must submit the IEP for the largest monetary claim.
  - The LEA will then submit 1 IEP for every ten claims thereafter.
  - Only submit required parts of the IEP: PLAAFP, Special Factors, and the Services Page. DO NOT SUBMIT THE WHOLE IEP!!
- Invoices for purchased items costing \$1,000.00 or more (not including purchased Services).
- <u>Directions on HCO required submissions</u>.



#### Monitoring of High-Cost Records

- All High-Cost records including calculation evidence will need to be kept on file.
- Fiscal monitoring may include a review of High-Cost documentation during the district monitoring cycle.
  - Note: It will not be the same students that were selected during the claim review.
- The Monitoring and Program Effectiveness team may review High-Cost documentation and make classroom visits while on-site to verify claim documentation.



# Eligibility Criteria

High-Cost



# Eligibility Criteria for High-Cost Occurrences

- A district is deemed eligible to apply for reimbursement for a High-Cost occurrence when the costs associated with an individual student, after offsets from other available revenue sources, exceeds \$15,000.
- The costs must be incurred solely due to the provision of special education and related services to the individual student.
  - The services claimed in the High-Cost claim <u>MUST</u> be documented in the student's IEP.



## **Definitions**

High-Cost



#### **Definitions**

#### **Private Duty Nurse (PDN)**

Private Duty Nursing services are those medically necessary services provided by a Registered Nurse and/or Licensed Practical Nurse under the direction of the recipient's physician. Private Duty Nursing services may be covered for ventilator-dependent recipients when determined medically necessary and prescribed by a physician.

Other areas that meet the requirements of PDN are:

- Intravenous Drugs (e.g. chemotherapy, pain relief, or prolonged IV antibiotics);
- Respiratory Tracheostomy or Oxygen Supplementation;
- Total Care Support for ADLs and close patient monitoring; and
- Hyperalimentation parenteral or enteral.

#### **Personal Care Assistant (PCA)**

Personal care services assist with a child's daily living, physical dependency needs.
Routines and activities of daily living might include:

- Bathing
- Bladder and bowel requirements
- Dressing and eating
- Personal Hygiene
- Mobility and Ambulation
- Incidental housekeeping, laundry, shopping

The personal care assistant must be trained by a Registered Nurse in the specific areas needed to meet the needs of the student. The IEP should document the specific needs of the student, and PCA should be included in the related services section of the IEP.



#### Definitions

#### Paraprofessional (para)

A paraprofessional is a staff member other than a teacher who works directly with students with disabilities under the direct supervision of a teacher or other licensed professional, and who has received appropriate training pertaining to the tasks and activities he/she is asked to perform and who meets state-established qualification standards.

#### Teacher

A Special Ed program code is required for all SPED teachers, function range 1200-1299. Specially designed instruction is designed to support the needs of students with disabilities as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

The function code used in eFinance for the SPED teacher claimed establishes the student/teacher ratio to be used in descriptions and calculations within the High-Cost claim, <u>regardless</u> of the actual number of students in the classroom.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*



High-Cost



#### (if documented in student's IEP pages)

#### The pro-rata share of:

- Teacher whose primary assignment is the student and is prorated by size/code of class.
  - o 1:15 function 1230 (1220 if the LEA meets the requirements for a resource room teacher): **.0667**
  - o 1:10 function 1240: **.10**
  - 1:6 function 1260: .1667
- Paraprofessional whose primary assignment is the student: 1:1.
  - Only one **classroom** para is allowed if there is no individual para identified in the student's IEP.
  - O Classroom para(s) are prorated by para to student ratio.
  - Additional support must be documented and need supported in the IEP.



(if documented in student's IEP pages)

#### Students are not required to have a Self-Contained LRE placement to make a HCO claim.

- All student entries that attempt to claim Special Education Teacher costs under function 1220 (resource room)
   will have IEP documentation and calculations requested by DESE OSE.
- All claims with function 1220 for Special Education Teacher costs will be reviewed for a two-pronged test:
  - 1. Does the student meet the Self-Contained LRE placement: Less that 40% if the Instructional Day in General Education?
  - 2. Does a Special Class function 1230, 1240, 1250 exist at the building/school the student attends?
- To claim function 1220 on Special Education Teacher Costs, the answer to the 1<sup>st</sup> prong must be "yes" and the answer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> prong must be "no".
- ONLY the Special Education Teacher costs under function 1220 will be removed from the reimbursement if both prongs are not met; other costs in the claim will continue through the reviewal process.
- Self contained in the Resource Classroom may be prorated at 6.67% and must be explained in the comment section.



(if documented in student's IEP pages)

- Speech language pathologist
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Private duty nursing services (see definition)
- Personal care assistant (see definition)
- Specialized transportation aide
- Specialized transportation bus driver
- Training of staff must be student specific and included in the IEP only include the prorata share for the student



(if documented in student's IEP pages)

- Specialized equipment
- Extended School Year (ESY) services (include the offset)
- Medicaid State Match (include the offset)
- Contracted services of a special day school facility including DDS-School Age Programs
   (\*this is not day treatment)
- Any special education funding source (including IDEA Part B)
- Personal Care costs can be included if the personal care paraprofessional has received training required for Medicaid billing or is working to complete required training.
   Please note in the medicaid section if the para is working towards certification.
- Paraprofessional or nurse's cost associated with specialized transportation needs of the student can be included if documented on IEP pages



## Ineligible Costs

High-Cost



# Ineligible Costs Include, but are Not Limited To:

- Basic costs of the classroom, such as the maintenance and operation of the classroom
- Basic materials and supplies, such as food, diapers, gloves, wipes, Ensure
- Basic transportation, such as mileage and fuel
- Other routine and normal costs associated with the provision of special education and related services to children with disabilities
- Cafeteria prep time for special diets
- Administrative staff such as Principal, Vice-Principal, LEA Supervisor
- Cost of evaluation for determining if a student is eligible for special education services



# Ineligible Costs Include, but are Not Limited to:

- The cost of a Residential facility or Day Treatment Facility
- Expenditures claimed for entire amounts of salaries & benefits of the teacher without indicating in the comment section that the teacher worked full-time to provide services on a one-to-one basis for the student
- Expenditures coded to Fund/Source 2244 or 1244 (ESY) but not included in the ESY funds received as an offset
- Medicaid offset if not reasonable with the other Medicaid information on the claim
- Estimate what should be received for the entire year, not just what has been received at the time of submission



# Ineligible Costs Include, but are Not Limited to:

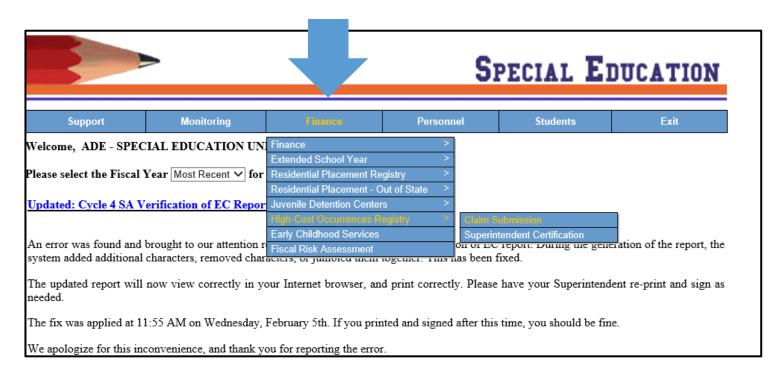
- Expenditures for the entire salary & benefits of paraprofessionals claimed for each student when more than one student was served
- Expenditures for the entire salary & benefits of paraprofessionals that were included in the instruction section and is also included as a prorated share of salaries & benefits for personal care
- Teacher Costs under 1211, 1253, 1256 and 1285
- Expenditures for Adaptive PE, Art, or other Specials
- Expenditures for Medicaid billing services
- Expenditures for construction, renovation, repair, and ADA access
- Expenditures for training that are not student specific and/or not included in the IEP



High-Cost



Once you have logged into MySped Resource with the district password, place the cursor over *Finance*. A drop-down menu will display. Place the cursor over *High-Cost Occurrences Registry* and click *Claim Submission*.





- Update required student information from the previous year.
- For new students, enter the student's Last Name, First Name, SSN (last 4 digits), Primary Disability, Date of Birth, Grade and Medicaid section.
- The *Grand Total of Cost* and *Actual Claim* are automatically calculated on the main student record screen.
- Total Offsets for the student are entered after submission by the system.
- The Grand Total is a summarization of cost entries from the Instructional, Related and Direct Cost screens.
- The Actual Claim is the Grand Total minus Total Offsets.
- The Actual Claim is the amount that will be considered in the reimbursement process.
- Edit the list for corrections and delete any students who will not be claimed this year.



#### **Required Student Demographic Information**

- First and last name
- Last 4 digits of the social security number
- Primary disability
- Date of Birth
- Grade
- Medicaid Section



#### Medicaid – required

- Does the student qualify for Medicaid reimbursement?
- Has the district received a reimbursement, if not, explain in the text box why.

#### Personal Care Assistant

- If the student has a personal care assistant, the PCA must be trained or working to complete training according to Medicaid guidelines.
- The district should be attempting to bill Medicaid.
- The district will be required to submit documentation of the training if the training was provided by someone other than the Medicaid in the Schools (MITS) staff.
- If the PCA is not trained, an explanation is required as to why the PCA has not received the training.



Support		Monito	oring	Fina	псе	Perso	nnel	Students	Exit		
SCREEN: High-Cost Occurences Registry  LEA: 9999 ADE - SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT  MESSAGE:  FISCAL YEAR: 2020/21   ZOUCK SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT											
<ul> <li>High-Cost opens for new FY on Nov 12th</li> <li>Add Student link is available from Nov 12th to Feb 6th only</li> <li>Demographics data is available for editing from Nov 12th to Feb 6th only</li> <li>High-Cost closes on Feb 6th with read ability; editing any data is not allowed</li> </ul>											
<ul> <li>High-Cost opens back on Feb 15th for claim submissions</li> <li>Only the students with Review Status 'Complete' or 'NEW' will be displayed on the High-Cost Student List after Feb 14th</li> <li>All the costs related data is available for editing from Nov 12th to April 1st (excluding Feb 7th to Feb 14th)</li> <li>Submit Claim feature is available from Feb 15th to April 1st only</li> <li>High-Cost closes on April 1st at 11:59 PM with read ability; editing any data is not allowed</li> </ul>											
High-Cost is locked from Jul 15th to Nov 30th with display only of students list     Once a student											
Paraprofessional Verification Report  Add Student  Student Details Report							been	ry has edited or d, the			
Last	First S			Submission	Fund	Fund	Review	revie	w status		
****	Name	456	\$33,064	Date	Approval	Amount	Status NEW	will c	hange to		
		021	\$				Complete	4			
		234	\$				NEW	1	_		
								Comp	oiete		
Page 1								]			



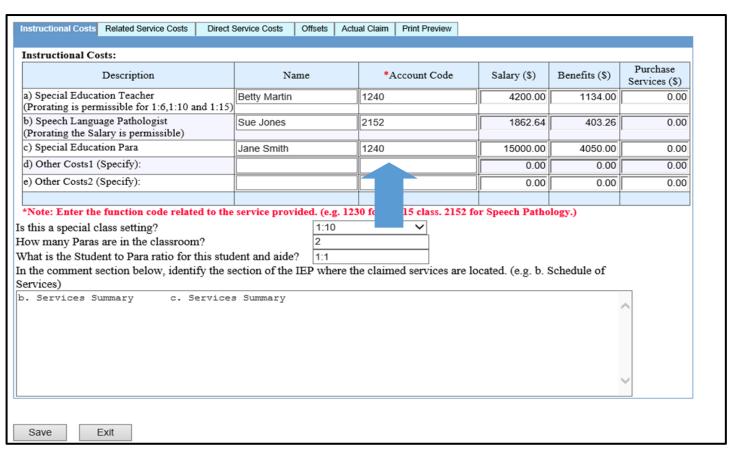
## Required Questions

SPECIAL EDUCATION										
	Support	Monitoring	Finance	Personnel	Students	Exit				
SCREEN: High-Cost Occurences Registry LEA: 9999 ADE - SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT MESSAGE:  FISCAL YEAR: 2020/21										
First N		Jayne	*							
Last N SSN	ame	Doe	*							
	v Disability	3456 Autism	(Only Last 4 di	Answers	Answers can be					
DOB	y Disaointy		/dd/vvvv)*	updated until Jan. 30.						
Grade		12th Grade	~							
					Roth Da	mographic				
			שטנוו שכו	Both Demographic						
			and Med	and Medicaid						
	provide the follow	<u>ring information:</u> ify for Medicaid Reimbur								
	es ×*	sections	sections are required							
a.	If yes on 1, have y									
	Yes V*	by Jan. 3	by Jan. 30.							
2. Does the student have a personal Care Assistant?										
	Yes   *  a. If yes on 2, has the person providing this service received the required training for Medicaid Reimbursement?									
Yes   *  Yes on 2, has the person providing this service received the required training for Medicaid Reimbursement?										
b. If yes on 2a, was the training provided by Medicaid in the Schools (MITS)?										
3. Are these services claimed in Instructional, Related and Direct Cost required in the Student's IEP?  Yes   *										
4. What percentage of the day does the student spend in the general education setting?										



### Claim Entry Information

• Expenditure information only requires the four-digit function code to be entered in the account code field.





#### **Proration of Staff**

High-Cost



#### **Proration of Staff**

- Time calculation used for paraprofessionals and other staff must match the time written in the IEP.
  - Calculation used must be on file and submitted in HCO LEA calculation sheet.
  - Include in the comment section, the **location** of information on the IEP, and any entry/withdrawal, service amendment dates, or change of staff dates.
- The 4-digit function code must drive the calculation for prorating the teacher.
- If a student, whose placement is considered self-contained, is receiving services in the resource classroom, this must be explained in the comment section.
  - O Self-Contained in the Resource Classroom may be prorated at 6.67% (1:15) and must be explained in the comment section.
- The 4-digit function code <u>must be a SPED code</u>.



# Example: Coding/Calculation

Name	Function code	Salary \$
Mrs. Teacher	1240	7053.00
Mrs. Para	1240	2338.60

### Calculation for the example above:

- Teacher
  - Special class 1:10. Salary \$70,528 x 10% = \$7,053.

Regardless of the actual number of students in the classroom, the function code is used in calculating the teacher's salary.

- Special Education Para
  - Para to student ratio in the classroom and supported by the IEP.
  - 1 para/5 students. Salary \$23,386 / 5 = \$4,677.20

<sup>\*</sup>Benefits will be captured at a flat 26% of the district employees' salaries.



## **Comment Section**

### In the comment section at the bottom of each tab:

- It is required that LEAs enter the amount of each Related Service as listed on the IEP.
  - Example:
    - Speech: 30 minutes/2x week
    - OT: 110 minutes per month
    - PT: 30 minutes/ 2x week (08/18-12/17); 30 minutes per month (12/17-end of the year)
    - Personal Care: 325 minutes per week
    - Specialized Transportation: 2x day
- Add entry/withdrawal dates, service agreements, and staff change dates for the student.
- Enter the location of the expenditure in the IEP
- Include any additional information regarding expenditures also.



## Medicaid

- Expenditures coded for Medicaid Match must include the Medicaid offset (Offset is required unless description indicates that provider receives Medicaid reimbursement and claim does not include a cost for the services).
- If related services such as PT, OT, and Speech are contracted and the district does not bill Medicaid, indicate under the Related Service Cost tab in comments.
- If the claim indicates that Medicaid has been billed, an offset must be entered, or explanation included in comment section.
  - It is required that an offset is entered when the LEA has Medicaid revenue for the student.
- Medicaid offset should be reasonable based on the other Medicaid information on the claim.
- Estimate what should be received for the year, not just what has been received at the time of submission.



## Reminders



- Appropriate 4-digit APSCN/eFinance function codes MUST be used for ALL costs (except fringe benefits) included in the claim.
- Funding from Medicaid, Third Party Liability, ESY, etc. MUST be attempted.
- Description of services for each expenditure MUST be documented in the IEP and provided on request.
- Description of how costs for each service were determined MUST be submitted in the HCO LEA calculation sheet.



## Reminders

 Other offsets may include Medicaid, Third Party Liability, ESY, or other funding sources.



- Medicaid Offsets <u>must be entered</u> if Medicaid was billed.
   <u>Estimates for the remainder of the year must be included.</u>
- If a contractor bills and collects Medicaid for services, the district is still responsible for the **Medicaid Match**. Note this in the comments section where appropriate.



## Common Mistakes

- Failure to include correct social security number for student, failure to record correct name of student, and failure to list educational disability.
- Failure to check that the name on the IEP is the same as the student in MySped.
- Failure to indicate whether the special class was self-contained (1:6, 1:10, or 1:15), the number of paraprofessionals in the classroom, or the student to paraprofessional ratio for paraprofessionals.
- Failure to indicate how the cost claimed was determined.
- Failure to have correct classroom function code.
- Failure to indicate that attempts had been made to obtain Medicaid or other Third-Party Insurance and an explanation in the comment section provided.



## Common Mistakes

- Failure to check time for the Para across several students.
- Function codes do not match classroom description/calculation.
- Using number of students in class for pro-rating teacher instead of classroom service type specified by account code.
- Not estimating Medicaid/Medicaid State Match for the entire year.
- Supports/services not documented in IEP pages.
- Staff member name on claim does not match name in eFinance.
- Claiming the same para on multiple students without pro-rating the salary.
- Superintendent's Certification sent before all claims were completed in the system.



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- All supports and services claimed for High-Cost must be documented on the IEP pages to be considered.
- If additional IEP and/or calculation evidence is requested for expenditures for the current year, the LEA must submit in a timely manner to receive claim.
- Calculations can only be submitted electronically via HCO LEA calculation sheet.
- If more than one IEP was used throughout the year, submit all IEPs.





### Examples:

- Related services
- Need for specialized equipment
- Need for Assistive Technology, including Augmentative Communication Devices
- Need for student-specific, specialized professional development
- Extra staffing services: personal care, one-to-one paraprofessional, classroom para support, etc.
- Need for specialized transportation and transportation para
- Need for specific supports for specialized transportation



- Do specify the amount/times for staffing services provided
  - personal care minutes/hours
  - bus aide supervision trips
  - minutes of related services
- Instructional Paraprofessional support can be documented in special factors and is not required as minute-by-minute basis on the Related Services page.
- Provide additional information on how the para supports the student(s)
- Not required to use brand names in IEP or specific devices
- Districts may document an Augmentative Communication Device without specifying an iPad or Vanguard, etc.
- Districts may document de-escalation and restraint training without specifying PCM, CPI, etc.



# IEP-Specialized Transportation



- Districts will need to document specific details about specialized transportation services in the student profile or another section of the IEP.
- Most IEP teams document the specialized transportation service under related services.
  - o Information should be provided in an additional section concerning any specialized transportation needs (e.g., staffing or equipment)
  - Prorate the driver and bus paraprofessional



# What to Send if the IEP and Calculation Evidence is Requested

- The IEP pages that were listed in the comment section of the claim as well as the student information page are the only pages that will need to be sent. Typically: PLAAFP, Special Factors, Services Page, and LRE Page
- It is required that calculation evidence be electronically submitted in the HCO LEA calculation sheet and submitted via email.
- Please note your LEA # on the front page of each IEP.
- Please do not send the entire IEP.



# Prior to Submission

High-Cost

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## Prior to Submission

- Ensure the IEP includes services that are provided and included on the student's High-Cost Registry claim.
- Verify with the district business office that the 4-digit eFinance function code entered in the Registry matches the function code used in eFinance and is the correct function code for the specific class (i.e. 1:6 is function code 1250).
- Verify staff names match what is in eFinance.
- Verify the student's name and I.D. number entered in the Registry matches the student's name shown on the IEP (no nicknames).



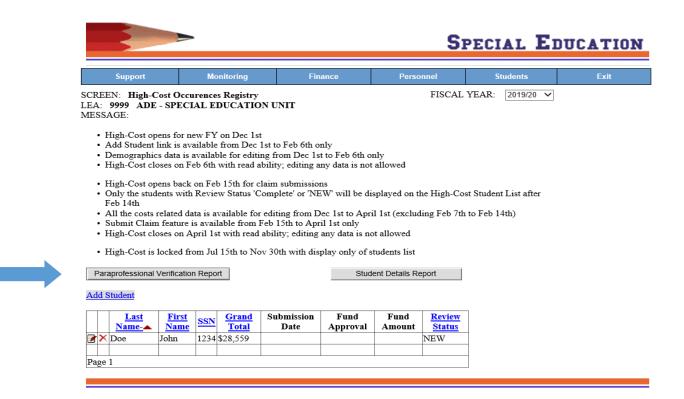
## Prior to Submission

- Confirm attempts have been made to obtain Medicaid, Third Party Liability, ESY, or other funding sources.
- Confirm that the training and/or certification of paraprofessionals providing personal care to students meets the required training for Medicaid Reimbursement.
  - Send Medicaid letter documenting training.
- Explain under related services if Medicaid State Match is included, but no services are listed (contractor does own billing).
- Put LEA # on front page of each IEP before submitting.



# Paraprofessional Verification Report

Districts have the ability to pull a verification of paras entered for all student claims. This is a valuable tool for checking accuracy before submitting - located on the main Registry screen.





# Paraprofessional Verification Report

### **ADE Special Education Unit**

### **Paraprofessional Verification Report**

Report Date: 1/3/2020 at 7:52:47AM

Fiscal Year: 2019/20

**Note:** Please verify the paraprofessional information on this report and make corrections in the catastrophic application if needed. Check this report again after making any corrections.

#### LEA: 9999 - ADE - SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT

#	Student Name	Paraprofessional Name	Ratio	A/C Code
1	Mary Berry	Cindy Lou Who	1:10	
2	John Doe	Jane Smith	1:1	

#### Report Summary for LEA 9999 (FY: 2019/20)

Distinct count of catastrophic students: 2

Distinct count of paraprofessionals: 2



# IEP, Calculation Evidence, Superintendent Certification

- All due March 18, 2026
- Email
  - HCO calculation sheet to <a href="mailto:heather.oshields@ade.Arkansas.gov">heather.oshields@ade.Arkansas.gov</a>.
- Upload into MySped
  - The Superintendent Certification
  - The required student IEPs
  - The required invoices



## Important Notes

- The Superintendent's Certification shows the amount claimed and the date submitted for each High-Cost Student claim.
- If either the amount or date submitted **DOES NOT** appear on the report, the submission for the Student claim for High-Cost is **NOT** complete!
  - The Submit Tab must be clicked first before it is officially submitted.
  - Check page 1 to see if it says "Successfully submitted".
  - Once the Submit button has been hit, changes can still be made, but a new Superintendent's Certification must be submitted that matches the submission date and claim amount.



## Reminders

- Required Medicaid questions are located at the top of the student main page, as well as explanations for Medicaid filing.
- Medicaid questions verify that the district has exhausted all means of monetary support.
- The demographic information and questions must be entered before the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.
  - If you make a mistake in the demographic information, you cannot make changes.
    - The student must be deleted and reentered.
    - This cannot be done after the February 6 closure date.
    - Double check yourself for accuracy.
- On the main screen, a *Paraprofessional Verification Report* is available for districts to check accuracy.



## **Contact Information**

Submit questions to Heather O'Shields or Josh Hart via email: heather.oshields@ade.arkansas.gov josh.hart@ade.arkansas.gov

More information is on the Special Education website:

<u>Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Offices - Special Education - Funding & Finance - High-Cost Occurrences (arkansas.gov)</u>